

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VILNIUS 000013

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NB AND EUR/RPM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/04/2014

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: LITHUANIA REAFFIRMS INTEREST IN AFGHANISTAN PRT MISSION

REF: A. ANDERSON-KELLY E-MAIL 1/4/05 AND PREVIOUS (NOTAL)
[B](#). 2004 VILNIUS 1196

Classified By: POL/ECON OFFICER TREVOR BOYD
FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#). (C) Summary. Lithuania is seriously considering leading a Provincial Reconstruction Team mission in Afghanistan. The MFA will brief the Foreign Minister and Defense Minister on the issue on January 6. Following the return of a GOL fact-finding team from Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif on January 11, President Adamkus will likely discuss GOL participation during a meeting of the State Defense Council on January 12. Lithuania's two most salient concerns are cost and staffing. It will want commitments of personnel and other resources from NATO allies before climbing aboard. End Summary.

Reaction to Prospective USG Support

[2](#). (C) Charge met with Kestutis Jankauskas, Director of MFA's Security Policy Department, on January 5 regarding Lithuania's possible participation in a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) mission in Afghanistan. Noting that a GOL team will conclude a fact-finding mission to Britain's PRTs in Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif on January 11, Jankauskas requested the meeting to obtain information regarding possible USG support for a Lithuanian-led PRT in Qala-ye Now or Chaghcharan. Jankauskas told Charge he will brief both Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis and Minister of Defense Gediminas Kirkilas on the issue January 6. President Adamkus, he said, would likely call a meeting of the State Defense Council to discuss, and possibly decide, Lithuania's participation in a PRT on January 12.

[3](#). (C) Noting that the GOL should submit a formal request for assistance, Charge described the technical, financial, personnel, and logistical support the USG might provide to the PRT per guidance in ref a. Jankauskas welcomed the news on the potential assistance, especially the prospective offer of a USG development aid specialist with access to USAID funds (the GOL has virtually no experience in that field).

[4](#). (C) The cost, and the January 20 deadline imposed by DSACEUR, still concerns the GOL, said Jankauskas. The GOL's 2005 defense budget has already been allocated; GOL funds for the mission have to come from somewhere else. For that reason, he said, the GOL remains focused on cost. To that end, Jankauskas said the GOL would appreciate additional logistical information, particularly related to transportation issues within Afghanistan and start-up costs. He agreed that some of these issues would clarify once Lithuanian fact-finders were on the ground next week.

Looking for a Partner

[5](#). (C) Though the GOL remains hopeful, Jankauskas observed that Lithuania's Baltic neighbors appeared reluctant to participate in a GOL-led PRT. He stressed the importance of obtaining personnel contributions from other NATO allies. The GOL, with 56 troops already detailed to Afghanistan, has nearly reached the 70-troop deployment ceiling established by the September 2004 international operations bill (ref B). While the GOL will shift some of those resources to the PRT if it commits, Jankauskas said that the GOL simply must have troop contributions from other NATO states if it is to run the PRT. In particular, he said, Lithuania would like to have troops from a larger and more experienced NATO ally (e.g., the United States, UK, Netherlands, or Denmark) to raise the PRT's security comfort level.

Comment

[6](#). (C) NATO needs more countries to lead PRTs. The GOL thinks that, in principal, participating in -- and maybe even leading -- a PRT would be a good thing. But it has concerns and questions that need to be answered before a political-level decision is made to commit. To answer these questions, the GOL is involved in an intensive information-gathering process on what such a Mission involves. Post appreciates the guidance Washington has

provided already; the quick responses we have been able to provide here have improved our chances of enlisting the GOL. We'll probably be back with more questions from the Lithuanians before they sign on the dotted line.

KELLY